

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 00662 291313Z
ACTION FBO-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 USIA-06 SY-05
/035 W

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R 291000Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2642
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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FROM STANGE

BONN FOR RCO; FRANKFURT FOR RSS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: ABLD, AFSP, ASEC, ACOM
SUBJECT:INSPECTION PROPOSED CHANCERY SITE BY FBO TEAM

1. FBO TEAM STANGE AND HELLMANN INSPECTED SITE NO. 10 PROPOSED
FOR CHANCERY SITE AND DISCUSSED ZONING AND REDEVELOPMENT PLANS
FOR THE AREA WITH CITY AUTHORITIES.

2. IN COMPARISON TO THE OTHER SITES CURRENTLY OFFERED, SITE
NO. 10 IS WITHOUT QUESTION BEST OFFERED. SITE 10 IS COMPRISED
OF 2 LOTS TOTALING ABOUT 10,400 SQUARE METERS IN AN L SHAPE.
THE AREA AND CONFIGURATION ARE CONSIDERED UFFICIENT FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF A CHANCERY, GARAGE, WAREHOUSING, MARINE GUARD
QUARTERS AND STAFF HOUSING FOR PERSONNEL SUCH AS COMMUNICATORS
WHO SHOULD BE HOUSED IN PROXIMITY OF THE CHANCERY. THE EXACT
CONFIGURATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AND MAY
POSSIBLY BE MADE SLIGHTLY LARGER. TOPOGRAPHY OF AREA
IS LOWER THAN CENTRAL SOFIA BY ABOUT 30 METERS. THIS
ASPECT SHOULD BE COORDINATED WITH INTERESTED OFFICES AS
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TO ACCEPTANCEBEFORE GIVING SITE FURTHER CONSIDERATION.
LOW POSITION WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO SMOG CONDITIONS.
AREA IS PRESENTLY BADLY RUN DOWN, NEAR TO CENTRAL CITY
HOSPITAL AND RAILROAD MARSHALLING YARDS. CITY PLANS
CALL FOR REDEVELOPMENT INTO 5 STORY RESIDENTIAL OR
APARTMENTS IN IMMEDIATE AREA WITH HIGH RISE PROPOSED
NEW INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL ABOUT 3 BLOCKS AWAY, SUBSTAN-

TIAL ENLARGEMENT OF HOSPITAL AND RELOCATION OF MUCHX
THE RAILROAD MARSHALLING YARDS. WHILE FBO TEAM DOES NOT
CONSIDER SITE AS IDEAL IT COULD BECOME ACCEPTABLE IF ALL
CITY REDEVELOPMENT PLANS ARE ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED.

3. IN DISCUSSION WITH VLADIMIR ROMENSKI, CHIEF ARCHI-
TECT OF SOFIA, AND NIKOLAY POPOV (CITY ENG.) OF BUREAU
FOR DIPLOMATIC SERVICES, THEY INDICATED THEIR PLANS FOR
REDEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA WOULD NOT BE FINALIZED UNTIL
THEY SAW OUR PLANS. THEY INDICATED THE REDEVELOPMENT IS
IMMINENT BUT WOULD NOT COMMIT DATE OF START. IT WAS
OBVIOUS THAT RELOCATION OF PRESENT TENANTS IN THE AREA
WOULD NOT START FOR SOMETIME YET OR AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER
WE WOULD ACQUIRE THE SITE. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT FBO
HAD INCLUDED PROVISION IN ITS APPROPRIATION REQUEST FOR
ACQUISITION OF A SITE FOR FY 1978 BUT COULD NOT MAKE A
COMMITMENT AT THIS TIME. THEY AGREED TO MAKE FORMAL
OFFER OF AN OPTION ON HE SITE INCLUDING A PRICE, BUT
WOULD NOT INDICATE PRICE DURING THE DISCUSSIONS. THEY
ALSO PROMISED TO PROVIDE FULL DETAILS OF ANY ZONING
REQUIREMENTS AND TO OUTLINE THEIR VIEWS ON CONDITIONS OF
CONSTRUCTION. THEY STATED WE COULD OBTAIN EQUIVALENT
FEE SIMPLE TITLE TO THE SITE.

4. FBO TEAM MADE CLEAR THAT OTHER SITES WOULD ALSO BE
CONSIDERED BEFORE FINAL DETERMINATION BUT THAT DEPART-
MENT WAS INTERESTED IN IMPROVING EMBASSY FACILITIES AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE AND THAT A FIRM OPTION ON THE SITE WAS
NECESSARY TO PREVENT ITS LOSS.

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5. FBO TEAM BELIEVES PRESENT CHANCERY LOCATION TO BE
SUPERIOR WITH INVALUABLE ASSET OF USIS DISPLAY WINDOW
WHICH DRAWS LARGE CROWDS. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN
TO RETENTION OF PRESENT CHANCERY WHICH APPEARS LARGE
ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE EMBASSY REQUIREMENTS IF MARINE
GUARD AND COMMUNICATOR APARTMENTS COULD BE RELOCATED
NEARBY. HOWEVER SUCH RETENTION, IF FEASIBLE, WOULD
STILL REQUIRE SEPARATE SPACE FOR GARAGING AND WAREHOUSING.
EMBASSY BELIEVES IT UNLIKELY, GIVEN CURRENT SHORTAGE
OF "DIPLOMATIC APARTMENTS", THAT NEARBY HOUSING FOR
MSG AND COMMUNICATORS COULD BE LEASED BUT FEELS IT MAY
BE POSSIBLE TO PURCHASE AND RENOVATE A NEARBY BUILDING.
BELIEVE EMBASSY SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO PURSUE THIS
POINT WITH GOB.

FELDMAN

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